

THE CENSOR.

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"I have sent the Book according to your commands ; I should have sent it, if you
"had not commanded me."—*Pliny the Younger*.

An Original and Unpublished Spectator, WRITTEN BY ADDISON.

MR. EDITOR,—Turning over some papers of the late Mr. Sheridan, at the house of a friend at Cranford Bridge,* I found the following Essay ; on the back appeared the words, "*Written by Mr. Addison,*" but not published, signed Thomas Tickell,† 1722. I offer no apology for sending it to you ; nor is it necessary to inform one so well read as yourself, that Mr. Tickell edited the collected works of Mr. Addison, which appeared about that time, which leaves the genuineness of the paper beyond dispute. *Lectorem delectando, pariterque monendo.* Hor. ar Poet.

On Happiness.

That happiness depends upon opinion, is a remark which has been frequently made, and as frequently assented to ; yet people in general though they are willing enough to complain, that their allotment of happiness is smaller than their deserts, do not seem to strike at the root of the evil, or endeavour to rectify their opinions. Perhaps opinion is a term not sufficiently precise and definite to be used in a moral speculation.

Opinion is a vague and undecided quality, which differs in the mind of every individual from that of his nearest and most intimate connexions. The change of opinion is also great ; no man can affirm that that which is his opinion to day, shall be such at any future period. Yet happiness, if it mean any thing, must mean some positive and settled good, not a vague desultory sense of amusement or enjoyment, which to-day may spring from a successful effort, and to-morrow from a good dinner and good society.

That species of opinion then, on which alone happiness can be said to depend, in researches into the springs that move the human mind, in which no expression can be too specific, ought rather to be termed, that disposition which inclines us to look on the bright

* Mr. John Graham, an old crony of Mr. Sheridan.

† Brother-in-law to Mr. Sheridan.

or the dark side of events. The want of precision in terms induces many errors in philosophical disquisitions; and opinion, which is liable to change from a thousand circumstances far short of conviction, is a very inadequate word to express the bias of the mind which determines the felicity or misery of a life. That people are at times gratified by trifles, which opinion alone can decide on, is not to be doubted: but to express such pleasure by the word happiness is another perversion of meaning. That disposition, bias, or temper, which gives a prevailing colour to all opinions, is, in fact, the foundation of the argument; and opinion hath no more right to arrogate to itself the properties of a quality totally independent of it, than it hath to decide on those immutable points of virtue and morality which it hath been the lax fashion of the prevailing philosophy to refer to particular judgments. If once we make opinion the measure of happiness, and the rule of right and wrong, we utterly remove the landmarks of true virtue and probity, and degrade happiness to mere casual enjoyment, and virtue to an exercise of fancy. The true spring of happiness is seated in the soul, and excites a disposition to view every thing in the best imaginable light. Whether this propensity to happiness be a gift of nature, or attainable by effort, is an enquiry worth making; and if it could be attained would surely be a great desideratum in philosophy. Perhaps the first step towards obtaining this very desirable bias for happiness, is to gain a perfect command over self, to put that busy individual entirely out of the question, and then judge according to general consequences and effects. Often, indeed, should we then perceive that partial evil is general good; and finding this system to hold good in many instances, we should soon be led to conclude, that it would do so in all. I cannot deny, but that some persons are so fortunate as to possess this constitution by the privilege of nature. Some there are, who from infancy appear to have laughed at the frowns of fortune, and who have found every thing through life conduce to their felicity.

Optimus and Pessimus were brothers; but brothers in blood alone, not in disposition. Optimus even in his earliest infancy was seldom or ever known to cry; and though they came into the world on the same day, he smiled many weeks before his brother. In childhood, the same difference of disposition continued: Optimus was delighted with every new plaything, and seemed to receive amusement from every circumstance that occurred; a look of hilarity continually animated his face; he never seemed to make any particular search after pleasure, but she came of her own accord, and presented herself to him. Pessimus, on the contrary, was seldom diverted, and never delighted; he looked on his playthings with scorn, and threw them away in disgust, or gave them to Optimus, and then seeing how happy his brother was with them, cried to have them back again. The parents of these boys both dying, their maternal grandfather, a man who had been a sailor, and who was pleased with the cheer-

fulness of Optimus, adopted him, and declared his determination to provide for him. The old man was not rich, but the father of Optimus had died in embarrassed circumstances, it was, therefore a fortunate circumstance for the boy.

Pessimus was still more successful; an uncle who had amassed a large fortune, and had no children of his own, took him to his house; had him instructed; and eventually established him in business, promising to make him his heir.

Optimus, whom his grandfather could not support in idleness, was sent to sea, and he had very few opportunities of cultivating much friendship with his brother; who, indeed, attended so closely to business that he gave himself very little concern about anything unconnected with it. His uncle died, and all his immense property devolved upon Pessimus; riches flowed in upon him from every quarter of the world. He married, and was blessed with several fine children. He had a noble house in town, and a charming villa in the country, and no man was thought more of on the Exchange. His country residence was at a beautifully romantic town on the sea shore, commanding a most extensive view of the ocean in the front, and of hill and dale in the rear.

In the first year of the residence of Pessimus and his family at this retreat, and in the dreary month of November, a terrible storm arose in the night; and the morning brought with it an account that a ship had been wrecked on the rocks, and that the wretched crew had just escaped with their lives, and were coming ashore in the different boats which had gone out to their assistance. All the inhabitants, and amongst them Pessimus and his family, together with all the strangers in the place, flocked to the beach to see the landing of these unfortunate people.

He was making a serious and melancholy harangue on the vanity and instability of human pursuits, intermingled with many pathetic reflections on the lamentable situation of these poor sailors, which drew tears from the eyes of his auditors, when the first boat landed. Exclamations of joy and welcome resounded on all sides; the drenched seamen were taken to different houses, and every one vied with his neighbour in rendering them some service; the publicans tapped their best ale, and in a few hours the recollection of danger was drowned in boisterous mirth. "What insensible unfeeling mortals," cried Pessimus; "how is my pity thrown away on wretches who are not awakened to a sense of their own misery." He was proceeding in his philippic, when a second boatful reached the shore, and as he surveyed the countenances of the individuals as they landed, one of them flew towards him with an exclamation of joy, saying to his comrades, "Did not I tell you that I was a lucky dog."

Pessimus gazed for a moment, and then opened his arms to receive his brother. A shower of sympathizing tears fell from his eyes at the condition in which he beheld Optimus, stripped to his

check shirt and trowsers, with apparently nothing saved from the wreck.

He expressed his commiseration in the most pathetic terms, till Optimus interrupted him by saying, "Ah! you are the same, Pessimus, still: reserve your pity for those who want it; for my part, brother, I am happy, and if you could but feel the delight which I experience at being safe on shore, when you had expected to have been drowned, you would own that I rather demand congratulation than pity." "Thou art the strangest fellow imaginable," cried Pessimus, "hast thou not lost every thing." "Let us discuss that subject at some other time; for whatever may have been my losses, I cannot count my appetite amongst them, and I have not eaten any thing for more than twenty-four hours." Food, and the comforts of a warm room, having recruited the spirits of the shipwrecked tar, the two brothers entered into close conversation, and Pessimus pressed to hear his story, but Optimus said, "Nay, tell me first in what situation I find you; and how you are going on in the world." Pessimus who, though abounding with comfort, always felt pleased in an opportunity afforded him to give vent to his complaints, explained the state of his affairs, and descanted at large on the great uncertainty of a merchant's affairs; the untoward position of public events; the multiplicity of cares that harrassed and perplexed him; and concluded with the confession that he was far from happy. "I know not what thou wouldst have," cried Optimus; "I believe thou art sick of too much prosperity. I am sorry that in circumstances apparently so fortunate, thou shouldst meet with any drawback on thy felicity. For my part, I have been a lucky dog all my life, I have no reason to complain of fortune; but I will tell thee my story. During the time of my living with my grandfather, the old gentleman was so frequently talking of the pleasures of a sailor's life, that he soon inspired me with a desire of going to sea. I made two or three voyages under a friend of my grandfather's, a Captain Copt, and a good seaman he was as ever reefed a sail; he died in the West Indies, and I succeeded to the command of the ship. I have made several voyages as master, some better and some worse; and during my last stay at home, I made a matrimonial trip, and my wife and myself do not live far from hence, and you shall pay us a visit, and see what a happy couple we are. I have lost my ship it is true, but I have no owners to account with; and what property I left on shore is safe; I'm sound wind and limb, and must set out again as a sailor before the mast, that's all."

At happiness so invincible, in the midst of such disappointments, Pessimus stared with astonishment; made him commander of one of his own ships, and more than reinstated his affairs on their former footing. More than this Optimus would not accept; and Pessimus returned to his magnificent villa, to marvel at the cheerful felicity of his humble brother.

The Death of Sappho.

The night came on, and from its darkening look,
 A deeper shade the minstrel's spirit took;
 On her still lute her cheek reclining lay,
 Pale as a white rose on its dying day:
 The waves beat high upon Leucate's shore,
 But, if she heard, she heeded not their roar;
 The lightning flashed across her upraised eye,
 But still it shrank not from the flaming sky;
 The crashing thunder broke upon her ear,
 And died away, as if itself in fear
 Of waking aught so dauntless into life,
 As Sappho seemed amidst the tempest's strife.
 But when at length the fitful breezes rushed,
 Through those dear strings that had so long been hushed,
 And woke the notes to which, in happier days,
 Her soul had breathed its most impassioned lays,
 As if some sudden but familiar tone,
 Had breathed a secret she had hoped unknown,
 She started up, and gazing on her lute,
 With a deep sigh, that asked it to be mute,
 As mothers clasp their infants to their breast
 And fondling try to lull their cries to rest,
 She caught it to her heart, and twining round
 Her pressing arms, thus strove to drown its sound;
 But finding still its chords kept throbbing on,
 Like joy's long echo after joy is gone,
 O'er the wild chords she bent her weeping head,
 And soothed its moanings with the tears she shed.
 The night had passed, and to the earth again,
 Aurora came with all her eastern train
 Of light and loveliness,—when Sappho raised
 Her mournful eye, and on the waters gazed:
 They were grown calm, as if there ne'er had been
 A breath across their blue and bright serene.
 The Minstrel rose—flung back her braidless hair—
 And with a look of resolute despair,
 Rushed to the ocean—gazed upon her grave—
 Kissed her sad lute, and sprang into the wave.

SFORZA.

“Triple Jeu de Mots.”

At a great public dinner lately, one of the party had agreeably entertained the company with some comic songs; and, on account of the heat of the apartment, proceeded to open the window, when he was unanimously solicited to re-exert his lungs for his friends' amusement, but the singer thereupon expressed his determination to “give himself *airs* and them none.”

Shakspeare's Characters.

The following is the first of a series of articles under the above title, which we purpose successively presenting to our readers. The confined limits of our work will not allow us to enter so minutely into the subject as we might otherwise feel disposed to do; we shall, however, give a clear, concise, and, at the same time, a compendious view of every character we may discuss, avoiding all superfluous and uninteresting matter.

No. I.

RICHARD THE THIRD.

It is not our intention to enter into a pedantic and unprofitable enquiry whether Richard *actually* was such as he has been described by poets and historians; nor would the result of such enquiry, whatever it might be, in the slightest degree detract from the justice of the admiration so universally bestowed on that unrivalled genius, whose masterly delineation of that one character, would be alone sufficient to rank him high in the estimation of future ages. It is not the province of the dramatist to furnish us with a narration of *facts* which have really occurred, for with these we become acquainted through other channels, but to present us with a true and faithful picture of mankind; so that vice and virtue being skilfully set before us in their proper lights, we may learn to respect and emulate the one, and to detest and avoid the other.

The ruling passion of Shakspeare's Richard is an ungovernable ambition: he himself declares ambition to be his sin; and to this one predominant quality may be attributed a great part of what is bad, and all of what is noble in his disposition. Why is he hypocritical, cruel, and resolute? Because hypocrisy, cruelty, and resolution are each of them necessary to the satisfaction of his ambition. The crown is the object which he perpetually has in view,—

“The restless world's to him but hell,
Till his misshapen trunk's aspiring head,
Be circled in a glorious diadem.”

To consummate this great purpose he recklessly sacrifices both body and soul; abandoning “remorse and dread,” he designates a crown—

“The bright reward of ever daring minds,
Nor can the means that get it dim its lustre.”

He is resolved to be—

“in men's despite—a monarch!”

Were we to divest Richard of his ambition, we should find him still malignant and dissimulating; but without that almost supernatural dauntlessness, verging on grandeur, which he manifests in his mighty endeavours to retain the regal power. His

dread of conscience begins to disclose itself immediately after the shadows of those whom he has murdered have appeared to him in his sleep; and it is not without an effort that he is enabled to shake of

“The terror they have struck into his soul.”

His hypocrisy, and particularly his cruelty, are unchanged throughout the whole of his career: he is always

“The bloody and devouring boar.”

These vices may, however, have been in some measure the result of the disgust, which he must probably have inspired by the singular hideousness and deformity of his person.

“Curtailed of his fair proportions,
Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
Deformed, unfinished,”

he must have been regarded with horror and contempt by those around him; and could, therefore, hardly be expected to have entertained benevolent feelings towards others, or to have repaid scorn with kindness.

It has been urged, and perhaps not without reason, that the easy compliance of the Lady Anne to become the wife of her husband's murderer, is unnatural; more especially when it is considered that the person of him on whom she consents to bestow her hand, is calculated to excite abhorrence and detestation. This circumstance, however it may tend to diminish the merit due to the author for the drawing of Lady Anne's character, in no way affects that of Richard; his endeavour to obtain her in marriage would, if successful, bring him nearer to the gratification of his ambition, and is, therefore, in strict accordance with nature; though there is perhaps a deviation from it, in her willingness to accept him as a husband.

In conclusion—Shakspeare's portraiture of Richard the Third we consider to be one of the finest and most mighty achievements that has ever done honour to the genius of any country. Long time has elapsed, and we fear will yet elapse, ere any dramatic composition will be produced, worthy of being brought into comparison with this forcible and true delineation of an ambitious and an overbearing tyrant.

Anecdote.

One evening, at the Worthing Theatre, whilst Emery was performing in the School of Reform, just at the most affecting situation of the play, where Tyke is in conference with Lord Avondale, and whilst the audience were all breathless with attention, a holiday juvenile, dressed in frock and petticoats, who had evidently expected a pantomime, and was waiting with visible impatience the appearance of the clown, turned round to his mother, and pointing to the two actors on the stage, exclaimed, in a tone of peculiar pathos and simplicity, “*Mamma! which of them two's the fool!*”

Stanzas.

Why dost thou sit and shroud thy face
In thy pearly hand! I see no trace
Of anguish; no, nor are sorrow's tears,
Quenching the hopes of thy half-breathed years.

Oh! sit not there in such withering gloom,
As if thou already wer't in the tomb;
Nor fix those eyes with that speechless glare,
As if life and love had faded there.

Dost thou not hear the vesper's tone,
Bidding us pray to the Holy One!
Oh! sister speak, and break this dread—
Santa Maria! she is dead!

F. C. N.

On Faith in Apparitions.

But, see, they're gone!—
The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
And these are of them.—MACBETH.

The subject we are about to discuss is a dangerous one. We are aware there are many persons who would at once stigmatize the adducer of arguments supporting a belief in the existence of spirits as a compound of credulity and absurdity—persons, indeed, so strongly prejudiced against aught connected with the marvellous, that they could not patiently listen to a discourse favouring what they would term superstitious notions. In many minds, where faith in phantoms dwells, we admit superstition to be the basis of the belief; but it may be placed on a more solid foundation—mature and deliberate consideration. Our assertion may cause the smile of scorn to quiver on the sceptic's lip, but let him examine the records of scripture and history for proofs of the justness of our doctrine. The appearance of the ghost of Samuel, he will consider himself bound to believe; while, from the manner in which the story is told, he will scarcely be able to doubt that an awful visit was made to Brutus in his tent. We will not, however, content ourselves with citing these facts; we will endeavour to show that a belief in the power of the dead “to burst their cerements and walk the earth,” may be justified by the tenets of our religion. The grand, the sole foundation of piety is faith in a future existence. Remove that faith from the mind of man, his evil inclinations, unopposed by the fear of punishment, would rule with despotic sway; virtue, less seductive than vice, would

struggle in vain against her rival, and the world would become a theatre where scenes of wickedness would be universally performed. Happily mankind is taught to think that the alluring paths of vice lead to perpetual punishment, while the more rugged ways of virtue conduct to everlasting felicity. But can the idea of unalloyed happiness be connected with total oblivion of those we leave on earth to mourn for us? Would the expiring husband consider that place a paradise, where his sorrowing wife and weeping children would be forgotten, where their mutual love would exist no longer, and the tie of affection be for ever broken? Heaven, viewed in such a light, would appear a place of sorrow. May we not, then, with reason suppose, that the form of a departed being may, to accomplish some wish, connected with those it loves be permitted to appear on earth? We will leave the question to be answered by our readers; not, however, before they have perused the following anecdotes, confirmatory of the supposition. To vouch for their truth would, perhaps, obtain for them no credence beyond that which our preceding remarks are calculated to procure. We shall, therefore, be contented with observing, they were related to us by personal friends, men in whose veracity we place implicit confidence, and the parties to whom the apparitions appeared.

The commanding officer of the garrison at Dover Castle happened to be at the bed-side of a sick soldier, who requested, in the event of his death, that a letter, containing a small sum of money might be forwarded to his wife, in London, by the colonel. The soldier died. Five days elapsed, and his request had not been complied with. Our friend was practising on a violin in a small room of the castle, when, taking his eye from the music, he beheld the soldier whom he had supposed buried, standing attired, not in the habiliments of the grave, but in his usual uniform. The colonel, thinking the man had unexpectedly recovered, was about to express his astonishment, when he was struck dumb with terror by these words, "You have forgotten your promise." The spectre glided from the apartment, leaving the person, to whom it had appeared, incapacitated by fear from making any exertion to follow. The words of the dead man made a deep impression: his request was no longer neglected, and he appeared no more.

This anecdote we conceive to be strongly corroborative of the justness of our proposition; the following tends to confirm it, though not so immediately as that we have related above.

A young orphan lady of large fortune eloped from her guardian with a handsome but dissolute man, to whom her riches had rendered her attractive. These, in the character of a husband, he obtained, and being addicted to play, soon lost the whole. He struggled for some time, to recover his losses, but finding himself reduced to the lowest ebb of misery, in a moment of desperation put an end to his existence. His wife was unable to bear the shock: a raging fever was the consequence, and on re-

covering from a state of delirium, she found herself in a public hospital, whither she had been sent by the mistress of her former abode; who, aware of the indigence of her lodger, was glad to relieve herself from what she conceived to be a burden. In this place she gradually recovered, and during her convalescence became acquainted with an abandoned woman, who, pretending deep commiseration for her unfortunate condition, offered an asylum at the house of a friend, until it could be ameliorated. The offer was accepted, and the wretched girl too soon discovered she had been inveigled to a house of infamy. Tears and reproaches were useless. She was either to remain contentedly in her situation, or quit the house deprived even of raiment, as the clothes she wore had been furnished by the wretch of whom she was the victim. The unhappy girl was, therefore, compelled to feign resignation to her lot, and to consent to be introduced to an aged lord, of whose proposals she begged, and was allowed, a week's time to consider. Mr. D——p, at that time a young and exceedingly handsome man, happening to hear the melancholy tones of a harp played in an adjoining apartment, requested to be introduced to the person who touched the chords with such exquisite taste and feeling. He was accordingly ushered into the presence of the unfortunate girl, who, on perceiving a stranger, ceased to play. He had been informed she, who he beheld, was a foreigner; and, addressing her in French, begged her to prolong those strains, by which he had been before delighted. She obeyed in silence. Her white hand swept fitfully across the strings;—her eye was fixed; she appeared unconscious of all around, and it seemed as if her mind wandered with the wild, deep, but heart-melting tones of the harp she touched. He who witnessed this scene, gazed on the object before him with amazement, admiration and pity. "Oh God!" he cried, "can it be possible, that a being such as this could voluntarily become what I supposed her? Impossible! she is betrayed, deceived; but the tiger shall be deprived of its prey. Yes, poor innocent and helpless girl, I will be your protector and your friend." The music ceased. She burst into tears, and clung, weeping, to him who had promised to save her. She told her story, and was assured she should be released from the place she loathed, before the following night, which was to give her to the hateful embraces of a superannuated nobleman.

D——p, at the time he promised, intended to perform; forgetting that having invited a party of friends to dine with him, on the following day, he should be unable to keep his word. He, however, consoled himself with the idea that the delay of a day would be of little importance; he, therefore, received his company, if with a mind not perfectly at ease, so little depressed as to afford no check to his usual vivacity. The glass and joke passed merrily round when, at midnight, he received a note couched in these words—"You have forgotten your promise, and death has now released me from dishonour. Farewell." His conscience told him who was his correspondent: he started from

his seat and hastened to her he had deceived. She was not dead, but the poison had destroyed her faculties; she gazed upon him, but knew him not. He was soon informed of all. Finding that she must submit either to infamy or death, the unhappy girl had chosen the latter. Assuming a cheerful air, she expressed her willingness to do all that was required of her, and requested some money to purchase a few ornaments to adorn her person. This was gladly given; and she left the house in charge of a servant, with whom she was to return; she contrived to elude the vigilance of her chaperone, purchased the fatal draught, drank it to the dregs, and returned unsuspected. On the poison beginning to take effect, she proclaimed to all the deed she had committed; and requested her note might be forwarded to the person for whom it was intended. D—p, at the suggestion of the physician, whose assistance had been called in, returned to his house, with an assurance that he should be immediately told when any thing decisive happened to the sufferer. He rushed into his chamber—threw himself upon his bed, but not to sleep. It was winter—the moon was shining bright and chill; and the cold piercing air brought every sound with astonishing distinctness to his ear. The chimes of many clocks had scarcely ceased to strike the hour of five, when a faint light was seen flickering at the further end of the dark chamber—the being he had promised to protect appeared before him. She moved her hand twice, as bidding him farewell, and vanished. For a time he could scarcely believe the evidence of his senses, and had almost reasoned himself into the supposition that his bewildered imagination had conjured up what he had witnessed, when he received a note from the physician running thus: “The unfortunate woman is no more; she recovered her senses a short time before her death, which took place precisely at five o’clock. Your name was the last word she uttered.” The shock occasioned by the receipt of this was violent in the extreme; a long and serious illness ensued; for months he feared to be alone a moment: and the effect of the fearful vision has not been destroyed by a lapse of twenty years, when the incidents above related took place.

Many anecdotes could be narrated of a similar nature, but we have already exceeded the space we intended devoting to a subject which many, perhaps, may have considered unworthy of serious consideration: we, however, think otherwise, as nothing can be more evident than that it is impossible for those who believe in spirits, to doubt for a moment the immortality of the soul, or that men will hereafter be judged according to their actions, and receive the punishment or reward they merit.—T. T. B.

Epigram.

Addressed to a beautiful Young Lady.

Lisette and Adela contended,
Which was the prettier of the two,
When I at once the contest ended,
By likening Adela to you.

Tributary Lines to the Editors of The Censor.

Censorious Editors! Illustrious Three!
 Of reason's hemisphere the galaxy!
 Accept the tribute that a poet pays,
 Nor be offended should you find it praise.
 Your minds with solid sense and judgment fraught—
Three strong digesters of substantive thought!—
 Shine brightly forth, as shines the summer sun,
 When he in heav'n his midway course has run.
 Your genuine wit enlivens all around;
 Beams through the moral atmosphere profound—
 Its grossness purifies—its coldness warms—
 And scatters peace where raging contention's storms.
 At your dread frown to Styx's river flee,
 Pride, Envy, Malice, and Hypocrisy.
 Comes forth a prating fool, with empty head,
 To combat wisdom, on by folly led;
 Your good broad-sword upon his back descends,
 And Sancho Panza like,* his way he wends.
 Go on to conquer then in reason's wars,
 Majestic Editors of Editors!
 Sheath not your swords till pride's vast legion dies,
 And—taught by ye—fools happily grow wise:
 Then shall ye have in honour for your seat—
 As those who well a glorious race have ran—
 A throne in which all graces then will meet—
 Yea!—e'en the *throne of thrones*—the heart of man!
S. B. J.

Dramatic Censor.

DRURY LANE.

It will be remembered that, in our third number, at the time when the newspapers were warm in their eulogiums upon the powerful company (as they termed it) engaged for this theatre, we pronounced it insufficient for the adequate representation of our old standard comedies. The truth of our assertion has been made fully manifest, by the weak and ineffective manner in which Sheridan's *School for Scandal* has lately been performed. Mr. Jones has appeared as Charles Surface, an assumption for which he is in no respect qualified: and his cast-off character of Sir Benjamin Backbite has been given to Mr. Harley, who possesses no one requisite which might, in the slightest degree, warrant his being selected to undertake the part.

Miss Russell, who had been announced as a young lady of great musical promise, has made her *debut* as Susannah, in the

* Sancho Panza, on having said something dishonourable to the genius of chivalry, procured for himself a severe reproof and castigation; on the application of the latter he skulked away *reformed*, and was never more heard to say the like again.

Marriage of Figaro. Her singing is pleasing; but we shall forbear entering into a minute criticism, till her reappearance may give us an opportunity of judging further upon her talents.

A petite comedy under the title of the *Youthful Queen* was enacted for the first time on Friday, the 24th of October last. The following is a sketch of the plot, which, it will be seen, is not devoid of interest.

Christine, the youthful Queen of Sweden, has conceived a strong partiality for one Frederick Bury, a young Englishman, whom she has accidentally met with whilst walking in her park. He is, however, unconscious of the rank of the individual with whom he has conversed, mistaking her for one of the ladies of the court; and shortly afterwards, receiving a commission in the Swedish army, he supposes it to have been obtained through her influence. He joins his regiment; and being thence deputed as the bearer of dispatches to the queen, he is surprised to recognise in her the lady with whom he has become acquainted in the manner already stated. He is promoted by Christine, who soon afterwards discovers his heart to be devoted to Emma, the niece of the prime minister, Count D'Oxenteirn; but her majesty's friendship for Bury having secretly ripened into affection, she commands Emma's immediate union with a young nobleman, whom her uncle has already selected for her husband. The marriage, however, does not take place, and Count D'Oxenteirn perceiving his sovereign's passion for Bury, and fearing that she may be inclined to sacrifice her dignity by bestowing her hand upon one so much inferior to her in birth, consents to Emma's becoming his wife, provided that the matrimonial ceremony is performed without delay. The nuptials are solemnised: on hearing which the queen is greatly incensed at the conduct of D'Oxenteirn, whom she finds to have been the instigator of this marriage, which is so contrary to her inclinations, she having resolved that the favoured Englishman shall share her throne. She compels her minister to resign the insignia of his office; he, however, persuades her that he has acted solely with a view to the honour and welfare of his country, and he is not only reinstated in his dignities, but is moreover invested with the order of the polar star. Bury, who is now elevated to the title of Count de Bury, is appointed ambassador to Copenhagen, and Christine is left to overcome her disappointment, and shew her philosophy, by not following the example of her prototype—the unfortunate Dido.

The male portion of the *Dramatis Personæ*, was supported by Messrs. Farren, Cooper, and Jones, all of whom did what they had to do, perhaps as well as it was possible for it to be done; but Miss Ellen Tree, who personated the youthful queen, was the chief ornament of the piece: her acting throughout was truly excellent. When we consider the transcendent abilities of this lady, and her undoubted qualifications for filling first-rate characters, we cannot but feel indignant at the conduct of the managers, in wishing her to undertake parts wholly beneath her talents. We do not, however, allude to that

allotted to her in the piece of which we are now speaking, for there is no other actress in the establishment who could have done it justice; but we know that she has been fined no less than sixty pounds within the last month, for very properly refusing to perform subordinate characters; surely this is a gross neglect of their own interest on the part of the managers, for it is a well known fact that the public are apt to appreciate an actor or actress according to the importance of the station, he or she may hold in the theatre. The piece was eminently successful, and at its conclusion, the vehement applause completely overpowered the hissing of some half dozen discontented individuals, whose expressions of disapprobation were of course rendered inaudible.

Mr. Oscar Byrne has appeared in a new divertisement. We only mention this circumstance for the purpose of hinting to Mr. Byrne, that spinning is not dancing, and activity not grace.

COVENT GARDEN.

The bad and unskilful manner in which this theatre is at present conducted, calls for severe comment. Though a month has already elapsed since the commencement of the season, only one novelty (and that merely a one act trifle) has been produced; which, notwithstanding the unequivocal disapprobation it has met with on each night of its performance, still appears in the bills. Instead of bringing forward new pieces, the managers have had recourse to revivals, and borrowing from the smaller theatres; and besides the disgrace attending such a proceeding, they have shown great want of judgment in their selection. For example, had they, when they found themselves unable to present new pieces to the public, revived some good old play, (of which there are many that have remained too long upon the shelf) though we should have pitied the poverty of their resources, we should have had no ground for censure; but when we find them disgracing the theatre, by permitting the performance of such nonsense as *Raymond and Agnes*, and the *Bottle Imp*, which has been already worn out at the English Opera House, we are resolved to use the lash unsparingly.

It will, perhaps, be urged by the managers, that the depravity of the public taste demands a sacrifice of their own: this we deny; and in support of our denial we offer facts—Shakspeare's plays, though they have been acted times out of number, will always, provided they be well cast, bring together moderate if not crowded audiences, while a spectacle or a melo-drama possesses merely a temporary attraction, and having been once seen is immediately forgotten. There is yet another great cause of complaint against the conductors of this establishment—their wilful neglect of the operatic department. Messrs. Wood and Bianchi Taylor, whose voices are as weak as those of a pair of expiring kittens, and scarcely more harmonious, are actually the leading vocalists, while Sapia remains disengaged.

Having made our observations on the management, and on proceeding to criticise the performances, we find that there have been not more than one or two of them which deserve remark.

Miss Byfield has appeared in the stupid opera of *Carron Side*, and has been well received. She is now a very respectable singer, and practice will probably make her a very good one. Messrs. Bianchi Taylor and Wood squeaked through two characters in the same opera; the former gentleman taking the part which was last season sustained by Sapio: comparisons would, in this instance, be indeed odious.

On Wednesday week last, a petite comedy, called the *Step-Mother*, was produced; which, if we except a little good acting by Miss Goward, contains nothing to warrant a reception different from that which it met with, on the first night of its representation.

Mr. Kean has appeared—greatly increased in his size, but considerably fallen off in his acting; he is much fatter, and less energetic than he was last season. On Monday, he attempted the part of *Macbeth* for the first time at this theatre. The performance was a failure; he has lost much of the fire which formerly used to distinguish his acting, and it is only at intervals that any of it is now to be discovered, even when it does break forth for a moment, it is but a flash, and subsides immediately. The only truly good point which he made throughout, the whole of the tragedy was in the last scene, when *Macduff* desires him to yield, his reply—

“ I'll not yield,
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,”

was a fine effort of genius, which he himself has not often surpassed when in possession of all his physical powers. But this one beauty is not sufficient to cover the many blemishes which we observed. His pauses were absolutely ridiculous; and his laugh, which he makes a practice of introducing two or three times, at least, in an evening, (no matter what character he is performing) almost made the audience inclined to laugh with him. Warde's *Macduff* was a capital piece of acting throughout, but particularly in the scene where he discovers the murder of *Duncan*: if this gentleman would contrive to get rid of his whining, he would be a much better performer than he is at present. Miss Lacy undertook the part of *Lady Macbeth*, and as we do not wish to be ungallant, we shall say nothing more than that her best scene was that in which she enters with the taper.

SURREY THEATRE.

A new petite comedy, written by Mr. George Collins Gibbon, and called *Right at Last*, has been produced at this theatre, with but moderate success. Its chief fault lies in the extreme improbability of the plot and incidents, which almost entirely destroys the general effect of the piece. Mr. W. West, whom we are glad to find re-engaged, sustained the principal character very cleverly, and rendered it as amusing as it could be made; and Miss Helme enacted a part in which she introduced “*The Light Guitar*,” which she sung with much sweetness: but, notwithstanding these recommendations, the petite comedy was received with only partial approbation.

The *Marriage of Figaro* was performed here on Saturday, the

18th of October, when Mrs. Waylett made her first appearance at this theatre in the character of Susannah. The engagement of this lady we consider a highly judicious step on the part of the manager; and she will be found a very valuable addition to the powerful and effective company which reflects so much credit on Mr. Elliston, for the unceasing zeal and liberality employed by him in conducting this establishment.

Mrs. Waylett went through her part delightfully; both her singing and acting were extremely bewitching, and all of her songs were encored. Miss Somerville appeared as Cherubino, the page; and when we take into consideration her youth, we are surprised at the talent she displayed. Of her singing in the opera of Artaxerxes we have already had occasion to speak in terms of admiration, but as the page she gave proofs of her abilities as an actress, of which we were not aware; and which, by sedulous cultivation, we are inclined to believe, may be rendered very considerable. Mr. W. West was an excellent representative of the lively Figaro; and Williams personated Antonio greatly to the satisfaction of the audience. On the whole, this opera as it is at present cast at the Surrey, would not disgrace either of the winter theatres; and it is to be hoped that the public will not allow the proprietor to become a loser by his spirited exertions in furnishing them entertainment which is really worthy of their patronage.

An historical drama, entitled the *Pestilence of Marseilles*, or the *Four Thieves*, was brought out at this theatre on Monday, the 20th of October last. The piece, as its name implies, is founded on that dreadful event in the history of France, the plague of Marseilles, and the depredations of the four thieves, who took advantage of this terrible calamity, in the carrying on their system of plunder.

Such materials as these, especially in the hands of so skilful and experienced a playwright as Mr. Moncrieff, could not fail in producing an interesting drama. It was received with universal approbation by a crowded audience, and has been repeated every evening with undiminished success.

ADELPHI THEATRE.

On Saturday last we witnessed the third representation of a new musical burletta, called the *Mason of Buda*. It is written by Mr. Planche, and is indebted for its success not to any merit of its own, but solely to the exertions of the performers. Mr. Sinclair and Miss Graddon sustained the parts of a pair of lovers, and executed the music (some of which was very agreeable) with taste and feeling. Messrs. T. P. Cooke and Wilkinson, and Mrs. H. Hughes, did their best to endeavour to relieve the dullness of the dialogue; but even with the aid of their abilities the piece dragged on heavily to its conclusion.

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